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the influence of such conventions will depend less on the importance of the parties to them than on the merit of the provisions which they contain.

How the Sunday Schools May Aid the Peace Movement.

BY BENJAMIN F. TRUEBLOOD, LL.D.

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The business of the Sunday schools, stated in simple terms, is to instill into the minds of children right ideas about God and his relations to men, and right ideas of the relations and duties of men to God and to one another. In both these fields Sunday school teachers may do an immense service in promoting the cause of peace among nations, the movement for which has now grown to be so great and commanding.

The idea that God is the Father of all men, of all families and races and nations, and that he loves them all and wishes to promote their true welfare and happiness, is a very attractive one to the fresh, open minds of boys and girls. The inculcation of this great truth, in simple ways and by frequent repetition, will do much to remove from the minds of the young the shrinking fear of God, so often found, and to kindle genuine admiration and love of him. It will also naturally do much to correct the narrow, crude notion of patriotism to which children fall so easy a prey,—the notion that love of country is an exclusive thing and requires a certain depreciation, if not actual hatred, of other races and nations.

When the Sunday school lessons are in the New Testament teachers will find no difficulty in impressing this larger love of humanity, for it breathes forth strongly from nearly every page of the Gospels and the Epistles. These wonderful pages know no national boundaries. Jew and Greek are alike to them. The same God is Lord and Father of all, of every race and of every clime. If the teacher maintains a habitually right attitude on this subject before the children,—and the habitual attitude of the teacher is more powerful and persuasive than any specific teaching,—the children will come naturally to think of the children and grown-up folks across the boundaries and over the seas as very much like themselves and the grown-up people whom they see every day.

In this way a true spirit of respect and goodwill towards the inhabitants of other lands may be produced in the children's minds and hearts, which will effectually prevent the appearance of that distorted sentiment of dislike and contempt of the people of other countries so often observed in boys and girls who have scarcely entered their teens. This is the most fundamental and telling of all work for peace. It is also the easiest and the most practicable. It is not true that children, as a class, take naturally and inevitably to quarreling and fighting. They manifest on occasions something of this disposition, but they much more frequently exhibit the opposite spirit, as careful observation of the life of children together will convince any one. They are, in the main, instinctively social and coöperative. Their young feet may therefore be turned easily into the ways of peace if they are taken in time, and fighting and war may be made positively disgusting to them, if not absolutely impossible. If the millions of children in our Sunday

schools could thus be directed by wise, enthusiastic teachers who have entered truly into the gospel spirit of peace and universal goodwill, our nation would, in a single generation, become a much more powerful and steady agency for the advancement of the world's peace than it has ever yet been. It would become incapable of those sudden gusts of popular frenzy against other nations which have more than once disgraced our national annals.

In the use of the Old Testament lessons much more care must be exercised by teachers to give the proper bent to the minds of children. I seriously doubt whether the "bloody stories" of the Old Testament, the story of David and Goliath, that of Samuel and Agag, and the like, ought ever to be used with classes of young boys and girls. There are plenty of stories which exhibit a noble and beautiful gospel spirit, like that of Joseph, of Daniel, of the infant Moses, of the separation of Abraham and Lot, etc., to give the children interest and inspiration, without resort to those of the bloody and cruel type. If these latter stories are used, they can easily be so presented as to make the children feel that the example of Jesus Christ and the principles and methods recommended by him are in every way finer and more attractive than these brutal deeds of an ignorant past. An excellent way to treat these stories of the Old Testament would be to study with them, on the same day, one of the peace passages of the Sermon on the Mount or one of the parables, or incidents in the life of Jesus, in which the spirit of kindness and mercy is so richly set forth.

The Bible schools may do most effective service in support of the peace movement by devoting one Sunday at least in the year to special peace exercises. The Sunday before Christmas has already, on the recommendation of the International Peace Congress, been set apart as Peace Sunday, and the observance of it by ministers, for inculcating special lessons of peace and goodwill, has been coming into more and more general use. The Sunday schools have not yet, to any great extent, taken up the observance. But it is most desirable that they all do so. Where it has been tried, the children have entered into the spirit of the occasion in a most hearty way. I listened last December to a Peace Sunday program entirely carried out by the children and the superintendent. It consisted of appropriate songs, selections from both the Old and New Testament, recitation of peace poems and prose selections, and a brief talk by the superintendent on the meaning and purposes of the day. It was an hour of exceptional interest to the whole school, and the boys and girls enjoyed it more than their ordinary Sunday school lessons.

In addition to consecrating this one day to the cause of peace, superintendents and teachers, if they are alert and watchful, will frequently find opportunity, in the ordinary course of the lessons, to impress upon the school or the classes some important phase of the subject. The day when the Sunday school makes its contribution to missions is an ideal time for the superintendent to emphasize the lesson of the essential oneness and brotherhood of humanity. The Sunday nearest to the 18th of May, the anniversary of the opening of the first Hague Conference, now annually observed as general Peace Day in many of the public schools and the colleges of the

country, is an occasion most suitable for calling attention to the recent extraordinary growth of the peace movement, to the manner in which the nations are coming together, to the remarkable success of arbitration in the settlement of international controversies, to the setting up of the permanent International Court at The Hague, etc.

The facts of this movement, as striking as they are numerous, will, if intelligently presented, prove of immense interest to the older Sunday school children. They will enable them to realize that the kingdom of God, of which Jesus spoke so much, is not an empty name, not a dream to be realized only in some far future, but that it is already, in many ways, a fact, not only in individual lives and in small groups of men and women, but also in some measure in and between the nations, into whose councils and institutions its principles and methods are already penetrating like the powerful leaven which ultimately mastered the whole barrel. The Sunday schools of our time will fall far short of their possible mission if they are not so conducted as to send out a constant stream of young men and women inspired and fitted to join the ranks of the peacemakers and to aid in bringing in that happy time when the nations shall learn war no more.

The Criminality of War.

FROM THE WESTERN CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE,
CINCINNATI.

[This leader from one of the strong and widely circulated church papers of the nation is interesting, not only in itself, because of its strong, clear, forceful statement, but also because it shows the trend of public thought on the question of the necessity of eliminating war from our civilization. Twenty-five years ago editorials of this character were not found in the great church papers. If they spoke at all, they defended war. Such editorials are now appearing with increasing frequency, and that is one of the most hopeful signs of the times. — ED.]

It is a matter of common observation that the greatness of a crime wards off censure. "We punish murders and massacres among private persons; what do we respecting war and the glorious crime of murdering whole nations?" So said Seneca, living in a country where Christianity was not recognized, where life was not held as sacred as it is to-day. How much the worse for us who profess to believe in the law of love, in the brotherhood of man, to slaughter thousands of our fellows, very often merely for a dispute in politics! We say we are fighting for our rights; that we are defending our principles. But what right have we to destroy our brother? In taking life — except under the most eminent reasons of justice — are we not violating the most sacred of all principles?

We regard dueling not only as foolish, but wrong. Why is it that what we frown upon in the individual we countenance among nations? If it is terrible for two men to try to kill each other, how much more terrible for ten thousand! While, as individuals, we have become civilized, as nations we are still barbarians.

It is a stain upon our civilization that we still settle our disputes by brute force. But what do we settle? Do we prove which side is in the right, which is the wrong? Do we not rather prove which has the better army, more men, greater wealth? What chance has a weaker nation against a stronger? It is unjust and

absurd through and through. What would we think of the standard of justice in a community where disputes were settled by fist-fights? No man has a right to judge in his own case. Likewise no nation should have such right.

Why should we glorify war? Wars for the protection of liberty and for the destruction of slavery, wars waged defensively in behalf of national existence, against aggressors and tyrants, wars like that of the Netherlands and England against Spain, and like our own Revolution and the War of '61, may be justified in the past. But have not most wars sprung from the basest of human passions, from a lust of power, a greed of gold, of land, from a false national pride and a scorn of other nations?

If there are qualities of heroism and self-sacrifice developed on the battlefield, it may be said also that the most brutal in us is brought to the surface. Malignant passions are created, and hateful recollections are breeding countless future wars and making men forget that they are brothers. In war time unprincipled demagogues are brought into prominence. "Truly," says one old Roman, "every wicked man has the greatest power of stirring up strife and tumult; peace and quiet need the qualities of good men."

Then think of the untold suffering — soldiers wounded and dying on the field of battle, not for any fault of their own, but because of the barbarity of the existing conditions; homes saddened by unnecessary death; oftentimes famine and ruin. Is this glorious? Sherman said: "Its glory is all moonshine. It is only those who have neither heard the sound of a shot nor heard the shrieks and groans of the wounded who cry aloud for more blood, more vengeance, more desolation. War is hell."

Under the conditions of the imperfect civilization of mankind throughout the past and in the recent centuries, indeed, war was perhaps inevitable. Man has not evolved, in his national life, entirely out of his brute inheritance. We may not have arrived, even at this day, at the millennium, but Christian powers are awakening, with a clearer and clearer consciousness, to the folly and sinfulness of war, and seeing that there is no real necessity for it, but a far better way.

Consider, too, the enormous cost. Great Britain spent \$1,100,000,000 in the Boer War. One-quarter of her own people habitually go hungry. How many schools, libraries, hospitals could have been built with that money? How much necessary work could have been done? But instead of educating the people, we have them slain. Instead of improving our own land, we desolate our neighbor's.

But after we have wasted so many lives, spent so many millions, have we gained anything beyond the immediate end of the contest? Some say we have. They contend that warfare makes a nation strong and brave; that a peaceful land becomes degenerate. But since a nation is an aggregate of individuals, a brave nation is composed of brave men, and what is our ideal of a brave man? Is it that person who is merely physically courageous? Such a one may oftentimes be a moral coward. Our ideal of a hero is he who dares to fight against corruption, ignorance, injustice and vice. But, further, how can a vigorous state be made by war, since the flower of its population is sacrificed to it? In the past patriotism, sacrifice even of life itself for one's country, has been so perpetually associated with guns and slaughter that they seem almost